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22 Sept. 62

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

*Argentina: (Information as of 0415 EDT) President Guido reportedly resigned early today under pressure from "hard-line" anti-Peronist army and navy elements and a military junta appears to be on the verge of taking over the Argentine government. An early morning announcement by the navy ministry indicated that officers of both factions engaged in the four-day-old struggle would be called into council "to reorganize the government."

Yesterday's short-lived "victory" of the Campo de Mayo rebels was followed by a renewal of hostilities when "hard-line" Generals Lorio and Labayru refused to accept their dismissal by President Guido. Air force participation in the struggle on the side of the Campo de Mayo rebels apparently provoked the navy into lining up on the side of the "hard-line" elements. It is not yet clear whether all forces involved in the struggle have heeded the navy's peacemaking overtures. The only certainty is that Argentina is closer to a military dictatorship than it has been since the overthrow of Frondizi.

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Cuba: [Fidel Castro and his "new Communists" still hold dominant positions in the regime's party and governmental machinery, but their power relative to that of the veteran Cuban Communists may be diminishing.]

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[signs of the resurgence of old-line Communists, especially Blas Roca, have become pronounced in recent weeks.]

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[part of the price the Cubans were forced to pay for the recent Soviet military deliveries was the yielding of a greater political and policy-making role to the "people in whom Soviet leaders have confidence in Cuba," i. e., the veteran Communists. [Soviet Ambassador Alekseyev is in frequent contact with and works closely with old-line Cuban Communists.]

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[Since last March, when Castro stemmed the veteran Communist drive for domination and purged old Communist Anibal Escalante, the old Communists have appeared to be adjusting to a role subordinate to Castro's leadership. Recently, however, Castro's dependence on the Soviet Union has greatly increased, and this may in time put him at a disadvantage in asserting his will over the old Communists, whom Moscow probably finds more reliable than Castro.]

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Sino-Indian Border: The clash which occurred in the northeast frontier area on 20-21 September has resulted in casualties on both sides, including the first admitted Chinese fatality of the year. Each side immediately issued strong protests and Peiping warned that the situation has "reached a most critical point and the flames of war may flare up" in the area.

The clash was probably the result of the Indian effort to expel Chinese troops which New Delhi alleges intruded south of the Mc Mahon line last week.

The incident will set back prospects for an early initiation of talks. In an exchange of notes just before the clash both Peiping and New Delhi had reiterated their proposals for border talks and had announced willingness in principle to meet on 15 October. Differences on the scope and substance of the proposed talks, however, have not yet been resolved.

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Laos: [Rumors of coup plotting continue to circulate in Vientiane. According to the most recent rumor, General Phoumi plans a coup on 9 October after the US Military Assistance Advisory Group completes its withdrawal.]

[Although these rumors are not supported by other evidence, it is clear that Phoumi and the right-wingers are becoming increasingly disturbed over indications that North Vietnamese troops are preparing to remain in Laos.]

[On 10 September, Phoumi told a group of his military supporters that if the "foreign troops"--presumably North Vietnamese--are not evacuated by the end of the withdrawal period on 7 October there would "certainly" be a resumption of hostilities.]

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Thailand: [Prime Minister Sarit apparently fears for his position if he does not show stronger opposition to US policy in Southeast Asia.]

[Confidence in his leadership of the military oligarchy has been shaken by a series of setbacks to Thai prestige following Sarit's endorsement of US policy in Laos against the advice of subordinates. The International Court decision awarding a disputed border temple to Cambodia and increased American military aid to Cambodia have figured largely in this context.]

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[] the proposed Thai-Soviet trade agreement is only the first step to free Thailand from its dependence upon the United States.]

25X1 [] Thai officials have agreed to ask for withdrawal of American troops from Thailand if Foreign Minister Thanat fails to obtain a modification of US policy toward Cambodia during his present visit to the UN General Assembly.]

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25X1 Indonesia: [Sukarno is proposing to make certain changes in the Indonesian cabinet in the near future.]

[The most significant change would be the elevation of Foreign Minister Subandrio to the post of First Minister, replacing Djuanda, who has been relatively inactive because of illness. This appointment would be a further indication that Sukarno is seeking to reduce the currently strong political role of the military in keeping with his long-standing policy of balancing opposing elements in order to assure his own continuation in power. Subandrio has opposed the army's participation in politics in recent years, whereas Djuanda has tended to support the military.]

[The changes would have no immediate effect on Indonesia's policies, but reduction of the army's political role could lead to increased Communist influence in the government.]

[It is not clear at present whether or not Subandrio will retain his Foreign Ministry portfolio after assuming the First Minister post. If he does not, the most likely successor to the Foreign Ministry is Ambassador to Moscow Malik, who has not been involved in internal political maneuvers.]

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British Guiana: Now scheduled for 23 October after two postponements, the London conference to set a date for British Guiana's independence will hinge on constitutional provisions on which the differences are so great that the conference may founder.

The Jagan party and the leading opposition party have threatened to walk out of the conference unless their respective proposals for the electoral system are agreed upon. Jagan insists upon retaining the present system of election by plurality, while the opposition parties are equally determined to install proportional representation. Disagreement is also bitter over Jagan's proposal to lower the voting age to 18.

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DAILY BRIEF

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Venezuela: A group of military officers

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[redacted] reportedly is plotting to overthrow President Romulo Betancourt before the end of September. Their objective is said to be "to put an end to Communist terrorist activities in the country."

Last month these military leaders demanded that President Betancourt take various steps to inhibit the activities of Communists and other leftists. One of their demands was that he remove the congressional immunity of two deputies charged with complicity in the leftist revolt of last June.

President Betancourt and other government officials have been aware of the plot for at least a week, but do not appear greatly concerned and have not taken any extraordinary security measures to prevent it.

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[redacted]

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